

## Abstract of the Disclosure

The present invention provides a method and apparatus for addressing distributed network device processors coupled together through an isolated control plane.

Specifically, where an Ethernet switch control plane is isolated within a network device, each processor is associated with an identifier unique within the network device and the identifiers are used as Media Access Control (MAC) addresses. Where control planes within multiple network devices may be connected together and the connected control planes remain isolated between the connected network devices, each processor is associated with an identifier unique across the connected network devices and the identifiers are used as control plane addresses. Using identifiers as addresses in isolated control planes avoids the need to assign and track globally unique addresses.

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